

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are currently pending. Claim 3 is hereby canceled. Claims 1, 4 and 5 are independent and are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification as originally filed.

Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting claims 3 and 6-8 recite allowable subject matter.

The features of claim allowable claim 3 have been incorporated into claim 1. Thus, claim1 is now believed patentable.

III. OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Applicants have amended the specification as discussed herein above to overcome the objection in the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

IV. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §101

Claim 5 has been amended in accordance with the recommendation of the Examiner to overcome the rejection.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5.

V. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,255,793 to Peless et al. (hereinafter, merely "Peless").

As discussed above, the features of allowable claim 3 have been included in each of the independent claims, claims 1, 4 and 5. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and believed patentable for at least the same reasons.

Thus, claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 have been put in condition for allowance by incorporating the features of allowable claim 3 into each of the independent claims.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, or

references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.


Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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